towards ensuring abundant availability of quality drugs at reasonable prices. The domestic drugs and pharmaceutical industry needs support in order to meet the challenges and to avail of the opportunities arising out of liberalization of our economy and the impending advent of the product patent regime. Government has been considering measures to lessen the rigours of the present price control mechanism, where they have become counter productive. Towards this end, Government has decided that the span of price control will be reduced substantially.

Import of Banned Drugs by Multinationals

3988. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether multinationals are importing banned drugs at an exorbitant price which are detrimental to the health of people in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that this is being done with the consent of DG Health; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Products which are detrimental to health are prohibited to be manufactured or imported into the country in terms of the provisions of Section 10A and 26 A of Drugs & Cosmetics Act and rules. Hence they are not allowed to be imported into the country.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Overcharging by Themis

3989. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Gujarat FDCA seeks Rs.40 lakh due from Themis for overcharging Tricox", which appeared in Pharmabiz dated 4th January, 2001; and

(b) what action is proposed to be taken against the company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has addressed the Commissioner, Food and Drug Control Authority (FDCA) Gujarat in 1992 about M/s Themis Chemicals Ltd. Vapi, District Valsad selling their product "Tiicox" at a price higher than the approved price without obtaining any price approval from Government in this regard. The matter was enquired into by the FDCA Gujarat. As per the enquiry, *prima facie*, M/s Themis Chemicals Ltd. has been selling Tricox tablets during the period 12.5.92 to 3.8.92 at a price higher than the one fixed by Government under the Drugs Prices Control Order (DPCO) 1987.

(b) The company has been issued a show causing notice by the NPPA in March, 2000 before initiating action under the relevant provisions of the DPCO 1995.

Nursing Colleges in Assam

3990. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of nursing colleges functioning, at present, in the State of Assam;

(b) whether Government propose to set up any new nursing institute in the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof, location-wise; and

(d) if not, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) There is only one Nursing College functioning at present in the State of Assam.

(b) to (d) Under the scheme 'Development of Nursing Services' Government is providing grant-in-aid to open new Nursing Schools in the Country. Under this scheme, two Nursing School in Assam namely (i) School of Nursing, Down-Town Hospital, Guwahati; and (ii) School of Nursing Hill-Town, Guwhati, had been sanctioned in